Case 3:09-cv-02388-LAB -WMC Document 1 Filed 10/26/09 Page 1 of 15

GERGOSIAN & GRALEWSKI LLP EDWARD M. GERGOSIAN (105679) 09 OCT 26 PM 12: 51 ROBERT J. GRALEWSKI, JR. (196410) 655 West Broadway, Suite 1410 CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA San Diego, CA 92101 Telephone: (619) 237-9500 Facsimile: (619) 237-9555 Email: ed@gergosian.com DEPUTY Email: bob@gergosian.com 6 Michael J. Flannery CAREY & DANIS, LLC 8235 Forsyth Boulevard, Suite 1100 St. Louis, MO 63105 Telephone: 314-725-7700 Facsimile: 314-721-0905 Email: mflannery@careydanis.com 10 Attorneys for Plaintiff 11 12 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF 13 14 ERINN TOZER, on behalf of herself and all Case No. others similarly situated, 15 CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT Plaintiffs, 16 VS. 17 GAIAM, INC. 18 Defendants. 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Plaintiff Erinn Tozer (hereafter "Plaintiff"), brings this action individually and on behalf of a nationwide class of similarly-situated consumers who purchased Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles that unbeknownst to her contain Bisphenol A ("BPA"), an industrial chemical that mimics estrogen and has raised health concerns in the United States and other countries. In support of her claims, Plaintiff, on personal information as to herself and on information and belief based upon the investigation of counsel as to all other matters, alleges as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- 1. Plaintiff and the members of the class paid more for Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles than other available alternatives because they reasonably believed based on affirmative misrepresentations and omissions by Gaiam that the bottles were BPA-free.
- 2. Indeed, Gaiam has marketed and sold its reusable aluminum bottles as being BPA-free and a healthy alternative to plastic bottles that may leach BPA.
 - 3. In fact, Gaiam's reusable aluminum bottles contain BPA and that BPA does leach.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 4. This Court has jurisdiction over this nationwide class action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332 as amended by the Class Action Fairness Act of 2005 because the matter in controversy exceeds \$5,000,000, exclusive of interest and costs, and is a class action in which some members of the Class are citizens of states different than Defendant. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1332(d)(2)(A).
- 5. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant transacted business throughout the United States, including in this District, in that it sold Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles throughout the United States, including in this District, and had substantial contacts with the United States, including in this District.
- 6. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(a) because Defendant does business in this district, Plaintiff resides in this district and purchased Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles in this district.

PARTIES

- 7. Plaintiff Erinn Tozer is a resident of San Diego County. She purchased two Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles from a Target retail location in San Diego County. As a result of the unlawful conduct alleged herein, Plaintiff has been injured in her business or property.
- 8. Defendant Gaiam, Inc. ("Defendant" or "Gaiam") is a corporation with its principal place of business in Louisville, Colorado. Defendant Gaiam sells reusable aluminum bottles throughout the United States and the state of California.
- 9. All acts alleged in this Complaint to have been done by Defendant were performed by its officers, directors, agents, employees or representatives while engaged in the management, direction, control or transaction of Defendant's business affairs.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

10. Plaintiff brings this action on behalf of herself and as a class action under the provisions of Rule 23(a), (b)(2) and (b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure on behalf of all members of the following Class:

All persons and entities in the United States who, between October 26, 2005 and the present, purchased a Gaiam reusable aluminum bottle for personal use and not for resale. Excluded from the Class are Defendant, its parent companies, subsidiaries and affiliates and all governmental entities.

- 11. Although Plaintiff does not know the exact number of Class members because such information is in the exclusive control of Defendant, due to the nature of the trade and commerce involved, Plaintiff believes that there are, at a minimum, tens of thousands of members in the class as defined. Accordingly, the Class is so numerous and geographically dispersed that the joinder of all members is impracticable.
 - 12. There are questions of law and fact common to the Class, including:
 - a. Whether Gaiam concealed the presence of BPA in its reusable aluminum bottles;

- b. Whether Gaiam engaged in unfair, false, misleading, or deceptive acts or practices regarding its marketing and sale of its reusable aluminum bottles;
- c. Whether the Class is entitled to injunctive and other equitable relief, including restitution and disgorgement, and if so, the nature of such relief;
- d. Whether the Class is entitled to compensatory damages, and if so, the amount of such damages; and
- e. Whether Gaiam is liable for punitive damages, and if so, the amount of such damages.
- 13. Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the Class members, and Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Class. Plaintiff purchased Defendant's reusable aluminum bottles, and her interests are entirely consistent with, and not antagonistic to, those of the other members of the Class.
- 14. Plaintiff is represented by counsel who are competent and experienced in the prosecution of consumer and class action litigation.
- 15. Prosecution of separate actions by individual members of the Class would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications, establishing incompatible standards of conduct for Defendant.
- 16. Defendant has acted or refused to act on grounds generally applicable to the class, thus making injunctive or declaratory relief appropriate here.
- 17. There are questions of law and fact, including legal and factual issues relating to liability and damages, common to the members of the Class that predominate over any questions affecting only individual members. Moreover, a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy. The Class is readily definable, and prosecution as a class action will eliminate the possibility of repetitious litigation. Treatment as a class action will permit a large number of similarly situated persons to adjudicate their common

claims in a single forum simultaneously, efficiently, and without the duplication of effort and expense that numerous individual actions would engender. Neither Plaintiff nor her counsel are aware of any difficulties in management that would preclude maintenance as a class action.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 18. Gaiam, Inc., began operations in 1988 in Boulder, Colorado. Gaiam, Inc., and positioned itself as an earth-conscious company. It markets and sells its products, including its reusable aluminum bottles, as being eco-friendly and a healthy lifestyle solution to its consumers. Gaiam's aluminum bottles have become increasingly popular with consumers over the last several years.
- 19. The increasing popularity of Gaiam's reusable aluminum bottles has developed in part as a result of United States consumers' efforts to find safe alternatives to plastic bottles and alternatives to bottles that contained BPA. BPA is a manufactured chemical compound commonly used in the production of plastics and epoxy resins. BPA has been found to affect the development of animals by acting like the hormone estrogen. According to the National Institutes of Health, neonatal exposure to low levels of BPA has also been shown to cause cancerous growths.
- 20. Media reports and government agencies in 2007 and 2008 expressed concern about the possibility that BPA could be hazardous to human health. For example, in the fall of 2007, the National Toxicology Program ("NTP") (an interagency federal government program) issued a brief on BPA based on a report of an expert panel on BPA ("NTP Brief"). The NTP Brief discussed the reproductive and developmental hazards associated with exposure to BPA. The NTP Brief was peer reviewed in 2008. Among the NTP's conclusions regarding BPA is that it had "some concern for effects on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland in fetuses, infants, and children at current human exposures to bisphenol A." (niehs.nih.gov website.) One of the NTP's recommendations to prevent exposure to BPA is to use baby bottles that are BPA-free. Even today Congress is considering a bill

to prohibit the manufacture, sale, or distribution of children's food and beverage containers composed of BPA (S.753 BPA-Free Kids Act of 2009).

- 21. Gaiam has benefited financially from the public's concerns regarding BPA and consumers' desire to purchased BPA-free products.
- BPA-free when in fact the bottles never were and still are not "BPA-free." The Gaiam bottles cost significantly more than comparable plastic bottles but were seen as worth the added cost by consumers who wanted to avoid products that contained and/or could potentially leach BPA. Indeed, Gaiam was aware that consumers believed its bottles to be BPA-free and did nothing to change this generally held belief among consumers.
- 23. For example, in its Spring 2009 catalog describing its reusable aluminum water bottles, Gaiam represented that "[o]ur BPA-free aluminum water bottle keeps your water clear and fresh, while keeping disposable water bottles out of landfills."
- 24. In its Fall 2009 catalog describing its aluminum water bottles, Gaiam removed representations that its aluminum water bottles were "BPA-free," but noticeably failed to inform consumers that Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles do in fact contain BPA.
- 25. As late as September 25, 2009, the "product description" tab on Gaiam's website for its bottle with "Rocky Mountain" graphics, amongst others, represented that its "[r]eusable, leak-proof aluminum bottles keep your water free from harmful plastic residues." Under the "product story" section of the site, Gaiam again represented that "[w]hen you use an aluminum bottle, your water remains free of unhealthy plastic residues" and that after testing "no detectable levels of BPA were found in the gasket, the cap or the coating material."
- 26. And, earlier this year, sometime in March, Janet Forgrieve a blogger funded by Gaiam discussed the health risks associated with BPA in plastic water bottles on the official

Gaiam website. She advised: "[y]ou can avoid plastics altogether with a reusable stainless steel or aluminum water bottle." She further admonished readers "[t]o do right by both your health and your planet, grab a BPA-free reusable water bottle made of the most eco-friendly material you can find."

- Then, sometime between September 30, 2009 and October 7, 2009, by quietly adding information to its retail website, Gaiam admitted after earlier representing that its bottles were BPA-free that independent lab tests had revealed BPA leaching levels at 23.8 parts per billion in its reusable aluminum bottles. Despite this, Gaiam has not changed the written representations on its reusable aluminum bottles guaranteeing consumers that by using Gaiam's bottles, "your water remains free of unhealthy plastic residues."
- During the class period, Plaintiff Tozer purchased two Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles from Target. Prior to purchasing the bottles, which she has since stopped using after learning that they contain BPA, she had become aware that plastic bottles could leach chemicals into the contents of the bottles. Wanting to be safe and wanting to eliminate any possibility that harmful toxins could leach into the contents of her portable bottles, Plaintiff purchased the Gaiam bottles. Had Gaiam disclosed that the bottles contained BPA in any amount, Plaintiff Tozer would not have purchased the bottles regardless of any claims concerning leaching or not. Instead she would have opted for an alternative glass or stainless steel or something else that truly contained no BPA so that she could be absolutely sure that she was being as safe as she could be.

CAUSES OF ACTION

COUNT I

(Violation of State Consumer Protection Statutes)

- 29. Plaintiff and members of the Class incorporate by reference the allegations above and re-allege each as though fully set forth herein.
- 30. Plaintiff and the members of the Class are consumers that purchased Gaiam reusable aluminum bottles containing BPA for personal, family or other household purposes.

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35. false pretenses, significant sums of money from Plaintiff and the Class. 36.

- 31. Defendants had a statutory duty to refrain from unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the promotion and sale of these bottles to Plaintiff and the proposed Class members.
- 32. Defendants violated this duty by misrepresenting or failing to disclose to consumers that the Gaiam bottles they were purchasing contained BPA. In addition, Defendants have engaged in conduct that creates a likelihood of confusion or misunderstanding. Defendants intended Plaintiff and the other Class members to rely on these deceptive practices by continuing to purchase and use Defendants' products and services and pay increased and illegitimate charges.
- Plaintiff and members of the Class were directly and proximately injured by 33. Defendants' deceptive practices by purchasing the bottles and/or paying more for the bottles than they otherwise should have paid had the true facts been known.
- Defendants' deceptive representations and material omissions to Plaintiff and the 34. Class were, and are unfair and deceptive acts and practices.
- Defendants engaged in wrongful conduct, while at the same time obtaining, under
- Plaintiff and the Class members were deceived by Defendants' misrepresentations and material omissions.
- As a proximate result of Defendants' misrepresentations and omissions, Plaintiff and 37. the Class have suffered ascertainable damages and are entitled to relief, in an amount to be determined at trial.
- Defendants' actions, as complained of herein, constitute unfair competition or unfair, 38. unconscionable, deceptive or fraudulent acts or practices in violation of various state consumer protection statutes.
- Plaintiff and the Class seek redress for the aforementioned acts and practices in 39. accordance with the following consumer protection statutes and specifically allege:
 - Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices (a) in violation of Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 44-1522. et seq.;
 - Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices (b) in violation of Ark. Code § 4-88-101. et seq.;

- (c) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200. et seq.: Cal. Civ. Code § 1750, et seq.: Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17500
- (d) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Colo. Rev. Stat. § 6-1-105. et seq.;
- (e) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 42-110b, et seq.;
- (f) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of 6 Del. Code § 2511, et seq.;
- (g) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of D.C. Code § 28-3901, et seq;
- (h) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Fla. Stat. § 501.201, et seq.;
- (i) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Haw. Rev. Stat. § 480, et seq.:
- (j) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Idaho Code § 48-601, et seq.;
- (k) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of 815 ILCS § 505/l. et seq.:
- (I) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Kan. Stat. ¶ 50-623, et seq.;
- (m) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Md. Com. Law Code § 13-101, et seq.;
- (n) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Mich. Stat. § 445-901, et seq.;
- (o) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Minn. Stat. § 325F.67, et seq.;

- (p) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Mo. Rev. Stat. § 407.010, et seq.;
- (q) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 59-1601, et seq.;
- (r) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Nev. Rev. Stat. § 598.0903, et seq.;
- (s) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.H. Rev. Stat. § 358-A:1, et seq.;
- (t) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.J. Stat. Ann. § 56:8-1, et seq.;
- (u) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.M. Stat. Ann. § 57-12-1, et seq.;
- (v) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.Y. Gen. Bus. Law § 349, et seq.;
- (w) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 75-1.1, et seq.;
- (x) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of N.D. Cent. Code § 51-15-01, et seq.;
- (y) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Ohio Rev. Stat. § 1345.01, et seq.;
- (z) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Okla. Stat. Tit. 15 § 751, et seq.;
- (aa) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Or. Rev. Stat. § 646.605, et seq.;
- (bb) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of 73 Pa. Stat. § 201-1, et seq.;
- (cc) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of R.I. Gen. Laws. § 6-13.1-1, et seq.;

- (dd) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of S.C. Code Laws § 39-5-10, et seq.;
- (ee) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of S.D. Code Laws § 37-24-1, et seq.;
- (ff) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Tenn. Code § 47-18-101, et seq.:
- (gg) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Utah Code Ann. § 13-1 1-1, et seq.;
- (hh) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Vt. Stat. Ann. Tit. 9, § 245 1, et seq.:
- (ii) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Wash. Rev. Code § 19.86.010, et seq.;
- (jj) Defendants have engaged in unfair competition or unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of Wis. Stat. § 100.18, et seq.
- Plaintiff and the members of the Class were injured by Defendant's conduct because Plaintiff and the Class would not have purchased Defendant's water bottles or would have paid much less absent Defendant's unfair, unlawful and deceptive practices. Plaintiff and Class members are entitled to damages, restitution, disgorgement, and/or other such orders or judgments as may be necessary to restore to any person in interest, any money which may have been acquired by means of such unfair practices and to the relief set forth below.

COUNT II (Unjust Enrichment)

- 41. Plaintiff re-alleges all prior paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 42. As a result of Defendants' course of conduct as alleged herein, many consumers were misled and injured by, among other things, Defendant's sale of water bottles containing BPA.

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- 43. Defendants' conduct also caused Plaintiff and members of the Class damage including, *inter alia*, payment of higher prices for Gaiam water bottles than they otherwise would have paid in the absence of Defendants' material misrepresentations.
- 44. If consumers had learned of Defendants' misconduct as alleged herein, many consumers would have lessened or stopped doing business with Defendant's altogether.
- 45. Thus, Defendants have been unjustly enriched in that they received and retained the benefits of the proceeds from substantial sales of water bottles, which they would not have made in the absence of their misconduct as alleged herein. These benefits were obtained from, and to the detriment of, Plaintiff and the Class members.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for relief as follows:

- a. That the Court determine that this action may be maintained as a class action under Rules 23(b)(2) and (b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, that Plaintiff be certified as class representative and Plaintiff's counsel be appointed as counsel for the Class;
- b. That the unlawful conduct alleged herein be adjudged and decreed to be illegal and in violation of the state and common law claims alleged herein;
- c. That Defendants be enjoined from engaging in the same or similar unfair business practices alleged herein;
- d. That Plaintiff and the Class recover damages, as provided by law, determined to have been sustained as to each of them, and that judgment be entered against defendants on behalf of Plaintiff and the Class;
- e. That Plaintiff and the Class recover punitive damages against Gaiam, consistent with the degree of Gaiam's willful, wanton, and malicious conduct, as provided by law;
- f. That Plaintiff receive restitution and disgorgement of all Defendant's ill-gotten gains;

g. That Plaintiff and the Class receive pre-judgment and post-judgment interest; 1 2 h. That Plaintiff and the Class recover their costs of the suit, including attorneys' fees, 3 as provided by law; and 4 i. For such other and further relief as is just under the circumstances. 5 **DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL** 6 Pursuant to Rule 38(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff demands a trial by 7 jury on all issues so triable. 8 9 Respectfully submitted, DATED: October 26, 2009 10 GERGOSIAN & GRALEWSK ROBERT J. GRALEWSK 11 12 Robert J. Gralewsk 13 655 West Broadway, Suite San Diego, CA 92101 14 Michael J. Flannery 15 CAREY & DANIS, LLC 8235 Forsyth Boulevard, Suite 1100 16 St. Louis, MO 63105 17 Attorneys for Plaintiff 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

%JS 44 (Rev. 12/07)

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating

the civil docket sheet. (SEE IN	STRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)		No metal	
I. (a) PLAINTIFFS		DEFENDANTS	•	, via
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	San Diego, CA 92101, 619-237-9500 DICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only) III.	CITIZENSHIP OF P	RINCIPAL PARTIES	Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff
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7 2 U.S. Government Defendant	4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	2	
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IV. NATURE OF SUI				
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Proceeding 2 R S	Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under nich you are fi 28. U.S.C. Section 132 (0)(2)(A)	Reopened anoth		n Judgment
VI. CAUSE OF ACT	Brief description of cause: Unfair and deceptive business prac	V		
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:		DEMAND \$		if demanded in complaint:
VIII. RELATED CAS IF ANY	SE(S) (See instructions): JUDGE	dee instructions): JUDGE DOCKET NUMBER		
10/26/2009 FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	SIGNATURE OF ATTO	OF RECORD		
RECEIPT # <u>6659</u>	AMOUNT 350,00 APPLYING IFP	JUDGE	MAG. JU	JDGE
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Sale of the Sale o

Court Name: USDC California Southern

Division: 3

Receipt Number: CAS006659 Cashier ID: msweaney

Transaction Date: 10/26/2009

Payer Name: GERGOSIAN AND GRALEWSKI LLP

CIVIL FILING FEE

For: ERINN TOZER V GAIAM INC

Case/Party: D-CAS-3-09-CV-002388-001

Amount: \$350.00

CHECK

Check/Money Order Num: 6057 Amt Tendered: \$350.00

Total Due: \$350.00

Total Tendered: \$350.00 Change Amt: \$0.00

There will be a fee of \$45.00 charged for any returned check.